

Remarks

This amendment is in response to the Office Action of December 2, 2003. In the Office Action, the Examiner withdrew claim 34 and rejected claims 1, 2, 4-13, 17-28, 30-33, 35 and 36.

The Examiner first rejected claims 1, 8-11, 13, 17, 18, 20, 25, 26, 28, 30, 32, 33, 35 and 36 under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over *Jenkins* in view of admitted prior art. However, Applicants reiterate that *Jenkins* teaches a conventional arrangement wherein the front end loader is controlled by first levers (24, 25) and the rear backhoe is controlled by second levers (32, 33). Thus, *Jenkins* does not disclose a single lever control of front and rear implements.

The Examiner uses a two-step assumption to reject the claims. The first step of this assumption is that rear mounted implements are interchangeable so that a cultivator or a blade can replace the backhoe. The second step of this assumption is that the use of the cultivator or blade would eliminate the need for the second lever. However, even if these assumptions are correct, the results of these assumptions only results in a single control lever operating the front loader only; it does not result in a single control lever that controls both front and the rear implements in a selectively alternate fashion.

The Examiner next rejected claims 4-6, 12, 21-23, 27 and 31 under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over *Jenkins* in view of admitted prior art and further in view of *Harada*. However, based on the asserted allowability of claims 1, 11, 18 above, these claims should also be allowable. *Harada* discloses a system wherein two implements on a front of the vehicle are alternately controlled. According to Applicants' invention, front and rear implements are alternately controlled using a single control lever. That is, once the diverter is actuated or de-actuated, the function associated with the same single control lever is switched from controlling a front implement to controlling the rear implements, or vice versa.

The Examiner next rejected claim 17 under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over *Jenkins* in view of admitted prior art and further in view of *Hein*.



et al. However, based on the asserted allowability of claim 1 above, claim 17 should also be allowable. *Hein et al.* also does not disclose a single lever control of front and rear implements according to applicant's invention.

The Examiner next rejected claims 2, 7, 13, 19 and 24 under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over *Jenkins* in view of admitted prior art and further in view of *Balzer* and *Hein et al.* However, based on the asserted allowability of claim 1 above, claim 17 should also be allowable. *Balzer* and *Hein et al.* also do not disclose a single lever control of front and rear implements according to Applicants' invention.

Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance and request issuance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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